Roundtable Associates Research

Roundtable Associates conducted research within the same timetable as The Frause Group team, and with a compatible mission. The information they gathered shined an additional light on the pipeline safety industry and the landscape regarding pipeline safety information. Because the information gathered was valuable in the development of the communications strategies, the research highlights are included below.

- A major cause of damage to pipelines and other underground utilities is impact or exposure resulting from digging operations.

- Washington State has an effective one-call system to "Call Before You Dig" and request utility markings, but there are no penalties for non-compliance. *Legislation was proposed but not adopted during the 2002 legislative session to strengthen the "Dig" laws with some penalties for non-compliance.*

- Damage report statistics are not available on a statewide basis.

- There are no consistent damage reporting practices or information collection procedures in place.

- The WUCC (Washington Utilities Coordinating Council) is focused on improving damage reporting and is developing a standard report format for use in Washington. Local Coordinating Councils have been given the responsibility to collect damage report data.

- The Northwest Regional Common Ground Alliance is a newly formed "policy-level" forum for implementation of damage prevention best practices. This industry-focused group meets quarterly and includes city/county public works department representatives..

- Training opportunities and materials for first responders and other emergency-oriented organizations are available on liquid and gas transmission as well as distribution systems through each of the pipeline companies and utilities.

- A 2001 Petroleum and Natural Gas Pipeline and Emergency Response Guidebook were developed by the Office of State Fire Marshal but funds for distribution and training are limited.

- A first responder pipeline emergency response training strategy and delivery plan has not yet been developed.